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THE
PERNICIOUS
PRINCIPLES
OF
TOM PAINE,
EXPOSED
IN AN
ADDRESS
TO
LABOURERS AND MECHANICS,

BY A GENTLEMAN.

THE SIXTH EDITION.

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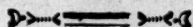
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THE PERNICIOUS PRINCIPLES

O F

TOM PAINE, &c.



YOU who are of the lowest class of beings that can be called MEN ; to you I address myself ; to you who are the scum of the earth, and unworthy the notice of gentlemen. It is reported, and generally believed, that many of you have had the *audacity* to read books of your own chusing, without being capable of judging which were fit, and which unfit for your perusal ; of course, political books have come into your hands, and amongst the rest, the writings of that infamous traitor and incendiary TOM PAINE. How, in the name of wonder, could men in your sphere of life—men that have had no better education than a common country school could afford—men that have been bred up to the spade and the pickaxe, or the saw and the hammer—or you who have been dealing out pins and laces in your shops—how, I say, could you suppose yourselves capable of making choice of books ? how could you think of dabbling in politics ? I am at a loss to say which is greatest, your ignorance or your vanity. You must be profoundly ignorant indeed not to know, that it is your duty never to touch a book of religion but what is put in your hands by the parson of your parish, nor a book of politics, unless handed you by a justice of the peace,

peace, or member of some corporation. The clergy, you know to be all good and pious men ; they never get drunk, and curse and swear, as you do ; but spend all t heir time in the study of divinity ; they never squander away their time in hunting, whoring and gaming, but sacrifice their whole lives for your good ; and surely then they must be the only men who can judge what religious books you ought to read. And as to magistrates, they are the king's representatives, and all wise men, by virtue of their office ; and surely they must be the only judges of politics and political books. Besides, they have an undoubted right, and magisterial authority, to forbid you to read, think, or speak any thing but what they approve ; and of late, you know, they have very justly and prudently exercised this authority ; but I fear, not before your arrogance in daring to think for yourselves, had corrupted you, and you had presumptuously, without leave of the magistrates, poisoned your own minds with the venom of TOM PAINE. This vile miscreant, this emissary of the devil, to be sure, holds out fine things to allure you ; he is deep in his plans to gain your attention, and win over the multitude to his side. He tells you of rights : he says, you, (a set of rag-gamuffins, and ignorant illiterate mechanics) have equal rights with other men. He tells you, that you are as much men as those who bear titles, such as *lords, dukes, earls, &c.* and that all men are equal, and that there should be no other distinction between men but good and bad ;—that you have an equal right with any man to the protection of your property ;—that, because you pay taxes

out

out of the money you labour for, you have as much right to know how these taxes are applied, as gentlemen who pay taxes out of an estate of 500 or 1000*l.* a year. A pretty tale to tell men of your description! Pretty notions to put into the heads of labouring men, men without clothes to cover their nakedness, without breeches! What rights can you pretend to? You have no rights but the rights of horses and beasts of burden. The horse or the ass labours, and his master feeds him with such food as he thinks fit; so you labour for the rich, and are fed by them, and ought to be contented with what they please to give you, What! would you be influenced by that miscreant PAINE, to give yourselves consequence, and consider yourselves as having rights; I tell you you have no rights: and if you dare to speak or think of any such thing, you must take the consequence of your presumption. You know every justice of the peace in the country is ready to receive information against you, and you may be committed to prison, and be hung, drawn, and quartered, for high treason. Or the soldiers may be ordered to fire on you, and kill you like dogs as you are.

This TOM PAINE tells you of the expences of government, that the king has a million a year; and there are many other rascals in the country too much like him, who grudge the poor king his salary that he labours so hard for, and would dock him to two hundred thousand pounds a year. What ignorant puppies such fellows must be, to suppose the dignity of a king can be supported with such a trifling sum! Why, it would be scarcely

scarcely 600*l.* per day, and what would this be for a king! a mere trifle, a nothing; such a salary would starve him by inches. What, take off 2000*l.* per day from the king's salary, and allow him only 600*l.* per day! Horrid miscreants! they would starve their king! I am sorry to find this is too much the spirit of the times: and this is the work such raggamuffin, bare breeched fellows as you are, would set about, if you were disciples of this TOM PAINE, and fancied you had rights.

But this is not all the expence of government. What goes to support the king consumes but a small part of the taxes which are paid; there are pensioners and placemen to be supported in abundance, and their dignity must be supported as well as the dignity of the king: and very useful men they are. If it was not for these men, a king would be no more than a cypher; he would never have his own way in any thing; all the men in power would be for ever contradicting him, and be prating about the good of the nation and the comfort and happiness of the poor, instead of the dignity of the crown; and then what would become of the king? We were as good have no king, and this is what TOM PAINE wants. He tells you of one man that has 8000*l.* a year, another 6000*l.* another 2000*l.* and so on; but he don't tell you how necessary these men are: that it is by their influence the king is supported; and, besides their influence, they are a very useful set of men in their respective offices. There is the groom of the stool, that always attends his majesty when he wants to go to stool; and surely this is an office so offensive, no man would like to undertake it for less than 1000*l.* a year: and
what

What could the king do without such a man? There have been men who have died in the action of disemboгуing, and surely a king's life is too precious for him to be trusted in such a situation alone. Then there is the Lord of the Bed-chamber, who puts the king's shirt over his head every time he shifts himself. A very useful and necessary office this, and I dare say the poor man has not above 1000*l.* a year for his trouble, and little enough too every body knows: and there are numbers of such like officers besides, and they must be all paid, as every man is worthy of his hire; and they ought to be all paid, and paid handsomely too. Then there is Mr. BURKE, who has only 1500*l.* a year for all his florid and eloquent orations in the House. Why, he deserved more than this for setting such low-bred, ragged-breeched dogs as you to rights, and telling you the truth, that you were the *Swinish Multitude*. This poor man, who strains his lungs at the risk of his health, and tears his throat for the king, has only 1500*l.* a year!

Now you see how the taxes are applied, and I hope you are convinced how necessary it is that we should pay taxes for the support of such a set of useful men; and, at the same time, you must be convinced what an infernal devil this TOM PAINE must be, to endeavour to persuade you, that those taxes were unnecessary, and that they were injurious to you, and contributed to your poverty! Now I will prove TOM PAINE to be a liar, and that the more taxes you pay, the more comfortable you and your families will be. Suppose you had as many windows in your houses as you pleased, and paid no window tax—that you

got a little fat, and made your own candles when you pleased—that you paid no duty for the leather your shoes are made of—or that you paid no duty for your malt, or the ale you drink. Suppose you paid no taxes for any thing you eat, drink, or wear, you would think it fine times! and, to be sure, if this was the case, you would get as much victuals, drink, and clothes as you have now, for less than half the money and I dare say you are ignorant and stupid enough to think this would be a great advantage to you. “Charming times!” you would be ready to exclaim “we should be all gentlefolks.” But I would wish to convince you of your folly, and point out to you the inconvenience and disadvantage of such times. The consequence would be, you would have a glass of gin for three farthings, for which you now pay two pence; and a pint of ale for a penny, for which you now pay two pence; and you would be all drunk and mad half your time, your families would be starved, and your masters work would not be done. These would be fine times, charming times, would not they?

Now I hope you are convinced that it is a happy thing for you that you are taxed, and heavily taxed too; and go to your work, and be thankful to the *gentlemen* who employ you for every thing you eat and drink, even if it was bread and water. It is your province to labour hard and live hard, and be thanked to the King, and WE Gentlemen, that you are not obliged to run in our carriages, and eat grains, as the poor do in some countries.

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